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RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE: A VIGNETTE APPROACH

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THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Science in
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Environment at the University of Kentucky

By

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE: A VIGNETTE APPROACH

The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the extent to which rape myth acceptance (RMA) varies according to four key contextual factors—race, the victim–perpetrator relationship, resistance strategies, and the decision to report—among those embedded within college and military cultures. Although sexual assault in a university context has been thoroughly investigated, it is typically in comparison to the general population that may not share the same high-risk elements that promote the environment for sexual assault. Therefore, comparisons of college, military, and a general population were sampled to better understand the attitudes that maintain RMA in these high risk environments. Consistent with previous research aimed at understanding attitudes associated with RMA (Carroll et al., 2016; McMahon, 2010), findings from this study indicated that although individuals hold relatively low RMA overall, individuals tend to endorse other rape myths that blame the victim and exonerate the perpetrator. Specifically, race, resistance strategies, and the decision to report all influenced how likely individuals were to attribute some blame to the victim in the vignette.

KEYWORDS: Mixed-methods, Sexual Assault, Violence against Women, Military, Gender Roles

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The United States Department of Justice (2016) defines sexual assault as any unwanted contact without the explicit consent of the recipient. Although official statistics are unable to pinpoint the exact number of sexual assaults that occur because many victims are reluctant to report the crime, the majority of victims are women (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). Further, gendered role expectations about rape and sexual assault intersect with race (Sigurvinsdottir & Ullman, 2015), sexuality (Davies & McCartney, 2003), and privilege (Maxwell & Scott, 2014) to shape beliefs about and responses to sexual assault. College campuses and military environments have been identified as high-risk communities for sexual assault, at least in part due to the combination of stress (Eekhout, Geuze, Vermetten, 2016; Shannon, Braley, Keckert, 1999), norms surrounding social situations (Orchowski, & Barnett, 2012; Wright, Foran, Wood, Eckford, & McGurk, 2012), and the high prevalence of alcohol use (Fuertes & Hoffman, 2016; Wessely et al., 2007).

Rape myths are "widely held beliefs that tend to generalize, trivialize, or even deny sexual assault" (p. 40), and tend to undermine the importance of reporting sexual assault to the proper authorities, question the legitimacy of the victim experience, and create barriers to legislation (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). More generally, rape myths indirectly help maintain a patriarchal society by espousing attitudes and beliefs that shift blame away from sexual assault perpetrators onto victims, minimize the perceived severity of the assault, and question the legitimacy of the victim experience (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). Acceptance of rape myths leads individuals to displace responsibility and

downplay the existence of sexual violence, especially when certain contextual factors are present (e.g., intoxication or provocative clothing; Hockett, Saucier, & Badke, 2016).

In the present study, I use a multiple-segment factorial vignette to empirically examine the extent to which rape myth acceptance varies according to four key contextual factors—race, the victim–perpetrator relationship, resistance strategies, and the decision to report—among those embedded within college and military cultures. However, prior to detailing the method employed, I provide an overview of rape myths, the status of sexual assault in these two high-risk cultures, and the importance of these four key contextual factors.

Rape Myths

In an attempt to understand rape myths and rape myth acceptance (RMA), radical feminist theory has focused on sex-role stereotyping of gender identities, roles, and behaviors (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). Widely held schematic representations posit that men should be dominant and sexually aggressive, and that women should be submissive and passive in their sexual expression (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). These schemas have undergirded the intergenerational transmission of rape myths (Hockett, Saucier, & Badke, 2016; Maxwell & Scott, 2014), and may encourage some to behave in ways that are not authentic to their actual desires as they attempt to conform to perceived social and gender expectations (Sanchez, Crocker, & Boike, 2005).

System justification theory posits that both dominant and subordinate groups maintain status hierarchy stereotypes because threats to the system are distressing for all involved (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013). Moreover, dominant group agentic traits (e.g., assertive, competent) and subordinate group communal traits (e.g., friendly, warm) create

complementary stereotypes, further perpetuating the status quo for how group members should behave (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013). Through the patriarchal socialization of masculinity and femininity, the biological differences between males and females are further perpetuated and exhibited by the "existence of powerlessness in women and violence against women" (Maxwell & Scott, 2014, p. 41). This preserves society's ideology of rape by engendering social acceptance for coercive sexual behaviors. Similarly, RMA is thought to further justify and enable masculine power (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2012; Maxwell & Scott, 2014).

Congruent with the idea that patriarchy sustains RMA, social justification theory indicates that when threats to the system occur, the system legitimizes the dominant group's superiority, maximizes the subordinate group's inferiority, and encourages systemic violence to maintain the status quo (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013). Four types of rape myths have been established: those that "blame the victim, exonerate the perpetrator, imply that only certain types of women are raped, . . . and suggest that claims of rape are not to be believed" (Maxwell & Scott, 2014, p. 41). Schemas that maintain sexual assault stereotypes can include, but are not limited to, the perceived level of severity of the assault (Simonsom & Subich, 1999), the perceived level of intoxication of the victim (Exner & Cummings, 2011; McMahon, 2010), and the perceived relationship between the victim and perpetrator (Simonson & Subich, 1999). Rape myths also negatively influence the likelihood that a victim of sexual assault will report the attack to the proper authorities (Egan & Wilson, 2012).

Rape Supportive Cultures

Rape myths help maintain the patriarchal structure of society by shifting the blame away from sexual assault perpetrators onto victims by justifying the actions of the perpetrator and blaming the victim (Maxwell & Scott, 2014; McMahon, 2010). Although scholars and advocates have called for prevention programs aimed at men, rape prevention education remains uncommon (Masters, 2010); rather, prevention efforts tend to be directed toward women, who are most often the victims of sexual assault (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2014; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies Pollard, & Archer, 2001, Masters, 2010; Maxwell & Scott, 2014). In addition, contrary to popular belief that strangers present the greatest risk of sexual assault, most sexual assaults in high-risk environments such as college campuses are committed by someone known to the victim and in social settings such as fraternity housing or residence halls (McMahon, 2010). Similarly, one-fourth to as many as one-third of female military personnel experience sexual assault during their time in the service, and in recent years most of those assaults have occurred in combat environments such as during deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan (Weitz, 2015). There is also reason to speculate that military sexual assault differs from nonmilitary assault (Skinner et al, 2000) in that decreased cohesion of the military unit can be detrimental while individuals remain in the service, and because reintegration into civilian life can be more difficult after leaving the service. Given that someone known to the victim perpetuates the majority of rapes (Krebs et al., 2007), rape may be even more prevalent in high-risk but relatively closed communities such as military and college campuses than realized, further demonstrating the need to explore

and understand these unique contexts where the prevalence of sexual assault is unusually high (Simonson & Subich, 1999).

College Culture

Campus sexual assault has become a highly visible issue in the media in recent years. For example, a Columbia University student received national media attention when she vowed to carry a mattress around campus until her assailant was found guilty for his crime (Vilensky, 2015). Sexual victimization has been characterized as an "epidemic health problem on college campuses" (Schwartz, McMahon, & Broadnax, 2005, p. 275). Indeed, sexual victimization rates among college women are currently about three times greater than the victimization rates of women in the general public (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2012). Institutional responses (or, lack thereof) to sexual assault have also been increasingly scrutinized. In May of 2014, the Office for Civil Rights published a list of 55 higher education institutions that were under investigation for violating civil laws that pertained to sexual assault (Novkov, 2016).

The majority of college students, males more so than females, accept rape myths as truths (McMahon, 2010) and are not actively involved in sexual assault prevention efforts on campus (Exner & Cummings, 2011). College students are willing to intervene in situations of overt sexual violence (McMahon, 2010); however, students indicate that there are multiple barriers to an individual's willingness to intervene (e.g., negative effects on friendships or potential harm to self; Exner & Cummings, 2011). Fraternity or sorority members, those who do not know someone who has been raped, and those with less sexual education tend to be more accepting of rape myths than their respective counterparts (McMahon, 2010). The majority of college students have some previous

education on sexual violence, however, males and females hold different views on the prevalence of sexual assault (Exner & Cummings, 2011). Although Title XII, the Violence Against Women Act, the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act, and the Campus Sexual Violence Act all lay out policies and procedures institutions of higher education must follow (Novkov, 2016), each university has its own organizational response to campus sexual assault. As a whole, however, intervention following a sexual assault is more prevalent than efforts to prevent sexual assaults on college campuses (Silbaugh, 2015). Empirical assessment on the effectiveness of prevention programs for reducing the frequency of sexual assaults on college campuses is scant (Kress et al., 2006), but one study found that exposure to comprehensive prevention programming (i.e., encouraging peer support, education on consent, and creating a victim-supportive social environment) reduced the reported prevalence of sexual assault victimization in first-year college students (Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

Military Culture

Historically, the military has been a masculine institution and has endorsed cultural attitudes traditionally socialized to men, such as showing no signs of weakness (Weitz, 2015). For example, during boot camp, insults such as “pussy” or “sissy” are commonly used and help reinforce gender stereotypes, insinuating weakness is equivalent to being better suited for a socially subordinate group (i.e., women; O’Brien, Keith, & Shoemaker, 2015). Rape and sexual assault are especially prevalent in cultures where men’s sexual aggression is not only tolerated but also ignored by peers, which makes women embedded within military culture particularly vulnerable to sexual assault (Foubert & Masin, 2012).

The Department of Veterans Affairs uses the term military sexual trauma to refer to sexual assault or repeated and threatening sexual harassment during military service (Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). The consequences for those who experience sexual assault in the military is becoming a more pressing public health concern as the number of women serving in the military increases (Skinner et al., 2000; Weitz, 2015). However, rape culture in the military is under-researched because of the relatively new practice of deploying women to combat environments, which is where sexual assault in the military is most common, and because previous surveys on military sexual assault focused only on 2–6 year periods, rather than asking about lifetime experiences of sexual assault (Weitz, 2015). In particular, sexual trauma among returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans has also received a great deal of attention from both the media (Kimerling et al., 2010) and the government (Department of Defense, 2013).

Although the Department of Defense has increased knowledge on how to report instances of sexual assault, there has not been an increase in service members doing so (Mengeling, Booth, Torner, & Sadler, 2014). Among individuals who were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, 15.1% of women and 0.7% of men reported experiencing some form of sexual trauma while deployed (Kimerling et al., 2010), ranging from sexual harassment to sexual assault (Skinner et al., 2000). Both active duty and veteran servicewomen have indicated that they are too embarrassed to report sexual assault and that they fear reporting could detrimentally affect their career (Mengeling et al., 2014). The mental health effects found in veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq (Kimerling et al., 2010) are further exasperated among women who experience sexual assault or sexual harassment while deployed; experiencing interpersonal violence such as

rape and sexual assault increases the risk of posttraumatic stress symptoms and disorders in high-stress combat situations (Foubert & Masin, 2012) and can make reintegration into civilian life more difficult (Skinner et al., 2000).

Some efforts have been launched to reduce the incidence of sexual assault in the military, and the initial results were promising. For example, compared to a control group that received the typical U.S. Army brief, those who participated in The Men's Program, a sexual education program, tended to have less RMA, an increased willingness to intervene in situations of perceived sexual assault, more ideas on how to intervene when the situation arises, and were less likely to commit a sexual assault themselves (Foubert & Masin, 2012). The majority of military personnel, however, do not receive this kind of training.

H_1: RMA is higher among those embedded in military culture than among those embedded in a college culture.

H_2: RMA is higher among men than among women within both military and college cultures.

Key Contextual Factors

Race

Individuals in racial minority groups may experience different outcomes after experiencing sexual assault because of differing socioeconomic and social factors (Wadsworth & Records, 2013). However, some evidence suggests that social support can act as a buffer for the development of PTSD symptomology following sexual assault victimization among minority women (Lipsky, Kernic, Qui, Hasin, 2015). Both White and Black victims are blamed more when raped by a perpetrator of another race than of

their own race (George & Martinez, 2002), and Black victims tend to be judged more harshly than White victims when the perceived respectability of the victim is low (Dupuis & Clay, 2013). Dupuis and Clay also found that Whites were more likely than Blacks to be perceived as guilty of rape when the victim was Black.

Race also plays a role in how individuals recover from an unwanted sexual experience (Sigurvinsdottir & Ullman, 2015); the recovery process for most individuals who experience sexual assault requires psychosocial adjustment, but racial and sexual minorities tend to have more deleterious effects after experiencing sexual assault (Sigurvinsdottir & Ullman, 2015). Black women are also less likely to report sexual assault than White women, perhaps due to less perceived social support (George & Martinez, 2002) or a distrust of the healthcare system (Wadsworth & Records, 2013). All of these factors contribute to secondary victimization of women by both the authorities and their peers. Although there are compelling arguments that attempt to understand the legal outcomes associated with the intersection of sexual violence and race (Dupuis & Clay, 2013), racial minorities and differences are underrepresented in academic literature as is relates to the victim–perpetrator relationship or the experiences of Black women who have been sexually assaulted (Wadsworth & Records, 2013).

H_3: RMA is higher when the race of the perpetrator is Black than when the race of the perpetrator is White.

H_4: RMA is higher when the race of the victim is Black than when the race of the perpetrator is White.

H_5: RMA is higher when the victim–perpetrator racial makeup is interracial than when the racial makeup is intraracial.

Victim–Perpetrator Relationship

Rape myths concerning the perceived relationship between the victim and the perpetrator can be an indicator of whether an assault will be reported (Maxwell & Scott, 2014; Simonson & Subich, 1999). For example, marital rape is perceived to be less severe, less violent, less psychologically damaging, and less of a violation of the victim than date, acquaintance, and stranger rape (Simonson & Subich, 1999). Again, the schematic representations held by society influence the perception of sexual assault pertaining to who can and cannot be a rapist, and therefore individuals who are assaulted by people close to them may receive less support in the aftermath of a sexual assault experience.

H_6: RMA will be inversely related to the closeness of the victim–perpetrator relationship; from highest to lowest RMA; stranger, acquaintance, dating, married.

Resistance Strategies

Despite research that indicates active resistance from women has a greater potential to keep the assault from escalating, only about 20% to 25% of women who are assaulted report actively utilizing resistance strategies (Edwards et al., 2014). Resistance strategies include, but are not limited to, forceful physical resistance (e.g., hitting), nonforceful physical resistance (e.g., running away), forceful verbal resistance (e.g., yelling), and nonforceful verbal resistance (e.g., pleading; Hollander & Rodger, 2014). Wong and Belemba (2016) suggested that individuals who resist in instances of sexual assault are more likely than those who do not resist to sustain physical injuries in addition to the assault. Individuals who do not resist, however, are more likely to blame themselves for the assault and are less likely to report the assault (Wong & Balemba,

2016). Police officers look for strong evidence to consider a reported rape legitimate, which can include evidence of obvious violence or personal injury, physical evidence such as DNA, or the presence of a threat, such as with a deadly weapon, during the assault (Venama, 2014). Although there is evidence that police look for physical proof of injury after an assault and the media rarely talks about successful resistance strategies utilized by women during an assault, there has not been an attempt to understand whether the general populations' perception of sexual assault varies depending on the resistance strategies utilized.

H_7: RMA is less prevalent when there is physical resistance than when there is verbal resistance.

H_8: RMA is less prevalent when there is forceful resistance than when there is nonforceful resistance.

Decision to Report

Individuals who report sexual assault perpetrated by an intimate partner, those who wait to report to the police, and those who appear to be intoxicated are more likely to be perceived as making a false allegation of sexual assault (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016; Lonsway, 2010). Conversely, individuals who report assaults quickly, report being assaulted by a stranger, and who have physical injuries are more likely to be believed (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016). Many instances of rape fall within the category of "difficult to prosecute" cases when there is a lack of physical injury and when the accused is able to say the victim consented (Lisak & Miller, 2010, p. 81). Although the trauma literature indicates that inconsistencies and omissions in individuals' narratives are common after experiencing a traumatic event, many police investigators view these

inconsistencies as indicators of a possible false allegation (Lonsway, 2010). In addition to not being believed, many women who choose to report their assaults experience revictimization by both the authorities and their peers.

One of the most important determinants of whether a sexual assault is reported may be the social norms surrounding sex and sexual assault. Social desirability bias postulates that differences in gender norms create differing expectations about what is socially acceptable for males and females (Kelly, Soler-Hampejsek, Mensch, Hewett, 2013). These gender norms and roles become even more salient when individuals are asked to report on potentially sensitive topics due to the tendency for individuals to underreport stigmatized behaviors and overreport normative behaviors (Kelly et al., 2013). In addition to the embarrassment and shame associated with being involved in a stigmatized experience, there is an element of self-judgment that occurs when one is asked to admit involvement in a stigmatized experience, regardless of circumstance.

Perpetrator narratives, however, describe a pattern of predatory behavior that begins well in advance of the actual assault (Lonsway, 2010). Perpetrators typically attack individuals within their social networks and refrain from violence that would leave evidence of personal injury in an attempt to create a situation in which the victim feels they have less credibility to report, and that may be perceived by others to be a false report (Lisak & Miller, 2016). This information may be useful in addressing "grey areas," that often characterize sexual assault (e.g., victim did not communicate consent clearly enough), but are still absent from the relevant literature. Therefore, obtaining knowledge that focuses on combatting rape myths also includes understanding the distinctions law

enforcement, healthcare providers, and lay individuals make between sexual assaults deemed to be "real" and those deemed to be "false."

$H_{9:}$ RMA is less prevalent when sexual assault is reported to police than when reported to a friend.

$H_{10:}$ RMA is less prevalent when reported to a friend than when not report to anyone.

Method

Factorial vignette surveys allow researchers to assess the effect of manipulated variables that are embedded within the vignette on individuals' judgments, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions (Ganong & Coleman, 2006), and can be especially useful for examining stigmatized topics that tend to be underreported, such as sexual assault. In contrast to factorial designs, the expanded vignette approach follows an ongoing story over multiple vignette segments, with questions following each segment of the vignette, but variables are not randomly manipulated within the vignette (Ganong & Coleman, 2006). Multiple-segment factorial vignettes (MSFVs), in essence, are a combination of the expanded vignette approach and factorial surveys. MSFVs are stories that evolve across multiple segments with respondent assessments between each segment that also have several key variables randomly manipulated within the vignette. This approach is particularly useful for assessing how respondents' judgments, attitudes, beliefs, or opinions change (a) across vignette segments within respondents as the story evolves or more information is revealed, and (b) within vignette segments across respondents according to the randomly manipulated variables (Ganong & Coleman, 2006).

Researchers must grapple with several methodological challenges when trying to understand attitudes pertaining to sexual assault. For example, fear of judgment from others is among the most common reasons social desirability bias affects research on sensitive topics (Chillag et al., 2006). In addition to the embarrassment and shame that often accompanies stigmatized experiences, self-judgment also occurs when asked to admit involvement in a stigmatized experience. In the context of sexual assault, individuals may blame themselves and believe that they somehow had a role in eliciting their own victimization and sexual assault. Therefore, MSFVs can be used to create hypothetical scenarios where the researcher has control over the manipulation of variables (Sleed et al., 2002). In the present study, five variables were randomly manipulated in a 4 x 2 x 2 x 3 x 4 multiple-segment factorial vignette.

Sampling

Three distinct simple random samples were recruited for this study: a general population sample, active duty military personnel, and students enrolled at a large land-grant university. For the college student sample, e-mail addresses of 22,466 undergraduate students enrolled during the Fall 2016 semester were obtained via an open-records request, and 6,783 of them were randomly selected for recruitment into the study. Active duty military personnel in existing panels were recruited with the assistance of the online sample administrators at Qualtrics. Finally, the general population sample was obtained via Amazon Mechanical Turk, which is a crowdsourcing platform with access to a large and diverse subject pool, found to be comparable to those found at large universities (Mason & Suri, 2012)

A three-phase recruitment method, consisting of an invitation, reminder, and follow-up (Kyrpri, Gallagher & Cashell-Smith, 2004) was used to contact potential respondents within the student sample. First, potential respondents were contacted with a personally addressed e-mail inviting them to participate in a confidential survey about sexual assault, with an embedded hyperlink to the survey and my contact information included (see Appendix A). Reminder e-mails were sent to respondents who had not yet completed the survey one and two weeks after the initial e-mail. Those in the military sample were targeted, with the assistance of Qualtrics, based on behavioral criteria identifying them as active duty military personnel. Finally, the general population sample opted-in to taking the survey using Amazon Mechanical Turk.

The overall dataset was comprised of 2,466 respondents with usable data, including 725 in the MTurk sample, 420 in the active duty military sample, and 1,321 in the college student sample. Specifically, the age of respondents in the general sample ranged from 18 to 87, with a mean age of 43. The majority of respondents in this sample were female (57.4%), representing a higher number than typically found in the general population, and White (74.6%). Respondents' reported more education than typically found in the general public with almost half (44.5%) completing a college degree or higher. The most common religious affiliation was Catholic (23.6%) with most reporting low levels of religiosity (40.8%).

The age of respondents in the college sample ranged from 17 to 73, with a mean age of 21. The present sample reported a higher majority of female respondents (71.8%) than what is typically found on this particular campus. Keeping with the racial and ethnic makeup of the university from which the sample was pulled, the majority of respondents

were White (81.1%), somewhat religious (33.3%), and Catholic (24.8%). Respondents' level of education paralleled greatly with what is typically found at a large Southern land grant institutions, with the majority of respondents completing college courses (69.2%).

The age of respondents in the military sample range from 17 to 61, with a mean age of 29.2. The active duty military reports that over 40% of active duty members are 25 years or younger (Department of Defense, 2015) making the present sample slightly older. The majority of respondents were White (66.2%) and Male (59.0%) which is a slightly lower than what would be expected in an active duty sample (Department of Defense, 2015). Respondents' appear to be more educated than what is typically found in the active duty population (Department of Defense, 2015) in that more respondents in our sample obtained a college degree or higher (32.2%) with another third of respondents completing at least some college. The most common religious affiliation was Mainline Protestant (25.5%).

Measures

The 22-item revised version of the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMAS-R; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; see Appendix B) was used to measure rape myth acceptance among respondents. The IRMAS-R includes language that captures subtle rape myths, with an emphasis on victim blaming (McMahon & Farmer, 2011). Example items include, "When girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they're asking for trouble," and "When guys rape, it is because of their strong desire for sex." Response options range from *strongly agree* (1) to *strongly disagree* (5). Subscales measure four types of rape myths: (a) She asked for it, (b) He didn't mean to, (c) It wasn't really rape, and (d) She lied. Response scores are summed within each subscale as well as overall, with

higher scores indicating fiercer rejection of rape myths. The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the IRMAS-R in a previous study with 951 college students was $\alpha = .87$.

Design and Procedures

Procedures for participation were implemented in accordance with a research protocol approved by the University of Kentucky Office of Research Integrity's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Prior to starting the survey, informed consent was obtained from participants.

Five independent variables were randomly manipulated in the vignette to assess perceptions concerning rape myths: the victim's relationship to the perpetrator, the victim's race, the perpetrator's race, the resistance strategy used, and whether the victim reports the sexual assault. Each respondent was randomly assigned to hear one of 192 versions of the vignette that depict different combinations of the randomly manipulated variables over two segments, with each segment followed by questions designed to assess rape myth acceptance in the given context. After completing the vignette, participants were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the 22 statements from the IRMAS-R. Respondents in the military were asked to take on a hypothetical friendship with either Erica or Anthony upon identifying that Erica was raped, to identify additional resources to tell about the experience if they so choose. Finally, participants were asked demographic information (see Appendix C) such as age, highest level of education achieved, race, gender, and occupational status.

Segment 1. The first vignette segment indicated that the victim is experiencing unwanted sexual contact or behavior without her explicit consent. The relationship

between the victim and perpetrator was randomly manipulated to describe them as spouses, acquaintances, strangers, or dating. The race of the perpetrator (White or Black) and the race of the victim (White or Black) were also randomly manipulated and visually depicted in photos that accompanied the vignette (see Figure 1). The victim's resistance strategy (nonforceful verbal resistance, forceful verbal resistance, nonforceful physical resistance, and forceful physical resistance) were also randomly manipulated. Specifically, respondents read the following (randomly manipulated independent variables are italicized):

> Anthony [pictorially depicted as a *Black*/*White* male] and Erica [pictorially depicted as a *Black*/*White* female] are *married/friends/strangers/dating* and are at a mutual friend's house party, having a good time. After having some drinks together, Erica ends up in a bedroom and passes out on the bed because she is drunk. Anthony finds Erica on the bed and has sexual intercourse with her, during which Erica wakes up and *kicks Anthony/runs away from Anthony/yells at Anthony/pleads with Anthony to stop*.

After reading the scenario, participants were asked three close-ended questions: (1) "Do you think Erica *has* or *has not* been raped?" (2) "Do you think Erica is *not at all responsible, somewhat responsible, mostly responsible,* or *completely responsible* for this experience?" and (3) "Do you think Erica *should* or *should not* tell anybody about her experience?" Then participants were asked to briefly explain their answers to these questions in their own words.

Segment 2. The second vignette segment indicated whether the Erica decided to report the rape to the police, a friend, or not at all. Specifically, respondents read, "After

Erica gets home the following morning, she is visibly distraught about her experience the night before. Erica decides to *report her experience to the police/tell a friend about her experience/tell no one about her experience*." After reading this, respondents were asked (1) "Do you think Erica *has* or *has not* been raped?" (2) "Do you think Erica is *not at all responsible, somewhat responsible, mostly responsible,* or *completely responsible* for this experience?" and (3) "Do you think Erica *should* or *should not* have told anybody about her experience?" Then, participants were asked to briefly explain their answers to these questions in their own words.

After the vignette, participants were asked to complete the IRMAS-R. Finally, a series of standard demographic items were presented.

Analytical Approach

The vignette. The three closed-ended questions–whether Erica was raped or not, whether Erica has any responsibility for the experience, and whether Erica should report the experience or not–served as the dependent variables. The question focused on Erica's degree of responsibility for the experience was collapsed from the four response options into a binary variable of *not at all responsible* and *at least some responsibility* because there was low variability in responses for this particular question. In fact, preliminary descriptive analyses indicated low variability in responses for each of the closed-ended questions (see Table 2) except for the question assessing the amount of responsibility placed upon Erica. Thus, two binary logistic regression models were tested to predict whether Erica was responsible for her experience or not based on the independent design variables and respondent characteristics (see Tables 3 & 4).

Open-ended rationales. Respondents' open-ended rationales for responses following the closed-ended questions were coded inductively, meaning the codes emerged from the responses provided by respondents (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The unit of analysis was a single rationale, which means that one response could be coded into multiple categories. One-third of the open-ended data were coded by a second coder to assess inter-rater reliability, which resulted in a considerable amount of agreement (κ = .83) between the two coders; this amount of agreement was classified as *almost perfect* by Landis and Koch (1977) and as *excellent* by Fleiss (1981).

Results

Descriptive statistics for responses to each of the dependent variables are shown in Table 2. More than 90% of respondents in each sample (military, student, and general population) and following each vignette segment were able to correctly identify that Erica had, indeed, been raped. Although college students were most likely to report that Erica had been raped, they were also the group most likely to attribute responsibility to Erica for her experience following the first vignette segment. However, after reading about Erica's reporting decision in the second segment, respondents in the general population were more likely to report that Erica had more responsibility for the experience than any of the other groups. The military and student sample did not vary greatly in their response that Erica should tell someone about her experience and although respondents in the general population sample overwhelmingly reported that Erica should tell someone, they were less inclined to do so at the same magnitude as the student and military populations. Based on the percentage of responses for each of the closed-ended questions

following each segment, it appears that those in the general population are more likely to ascribe to rape myths at a greater degree than students and/or military.

Is Erica Responsible for her Experience?

Segment 1. Table 3 presents the results of binary logistic regression analyses for predicting responses to whether Erica holds any responsibility for the experience following Segment 1. Although not directly tested, examination of point estimates of the OR and 95% CIs of the OR across samples indicate that some predictors affected responses differently in different samples. Most notably, the ratio of MTurkers with versus without sexual victimization experiences who attributed some responsibility to Erica was higher than in the college student and military samples. Said another way, MTurkers with sexual victimization experiences were more likely to place at least some responsibility on Erica than were their counterparts in the college student and military samples.

Within samples, notably, race was the only randomly manipulated vignette variable that statistically affected responses, and it only did so for the military sample. Also, the "she asked for it" subscale of the IRMAS-R was a consistent statistical predictor across samples: Each unit increase in score on this subscale corresponded with about a 50% increase in the likelihood of placing at least some responsibility on Erica. Notably too, respondent gender, religion, religiosity, education, and age were not predictors of the attribution of responsibility in any sample, nor did their relationship with the attribution of responsibility statistically vary across samples.

None of the variables manipulated within the vignette had a meaningful impact on MTurkers responses, and responses statistically varied according to only two of the other

predictor variables. Specifically, Black respondents were 2.5 times more likely than White respondents to indicate that Erica was at least somewhat responsible, and respondents who scored one additional point on the subscale "she asked for it" were 42% more likely to attribute some responsibility to Erica for the experience. Similar to the MTurkers, few variables were statistically associated with whether at least some responsibility was attributed to Erica in the student sample. Once again, responses varied according to the "she asked for it" subscale of the IRMAS-R—respondents were 55% more likely to indicate that Erica was at least somewhat responsible when they scored an additional point on this subscale—and each additional point on the "it wasn't really rape" subscale was associated with about a 10% decline in the likelihood of attributing any responsibility to Erica. For military respondents, the attribution of at least some responsibility to Erica depended upon the races of the vignette characters. Specifically, those for whom Erica and Anthony were presented as Whites were about 2.4 times more likely to attribute some responsibility to Erica than were those for whom both Erica and Anthony were presented as Black. Similarly, those for whom Anthony and Erica were both presented as White were more about 3.8 times more likely to place some responsibility on Erica than were those for whom Anthony was presented as Black and Erika as White. Taken together, these findings indicate that more responsibility was attributed to Black perpetrators than to White perpetrators, and that this difference was more pronounced when the victim was White than when she was Black. The odds of a respondent indicating that Erica held at least some responsibility were increased by 1.5% when respondents' scored an additional point on the IRMAS-R subscale "she asked for it."

Responses did not vary according to the victim–perpetrator relationship or the resistance strategy utilized by Erica.

Segment 2. Table 4 presents the results of binary logistic regression analyses for predicting responses to whether Erica holds any responsibility for the experience following Segment 2. Similar to Segment 2, although not directly tested, examination of point estimates of the OR and 95% CIs of the OR across samples indicate that some predictors affected responses differently in different samples. Perhaps different than what was shown following the first segment, race, the decision to report, and the resistance strategy used by Erica had a meaningful impact on the attribution of responsibility. For MTurkers, the attribution of responsibility depended upon the resistance strategy Erica used. Specifically, those who read that Erica pleaded with Anthony were about 25% less likely to attribute responsibility to Erica than if they watched Erica use a different resistance strategy. For student respondents, Erica's reporting decision impacted the amount of responsibility attributed to her in that when respondents saw that she told a friend about her experience, respondents were least likely to attribute Erica responsibility. For military respondents, the attribution of at least some responsibility to Erica again depended upon the races of the vignette characters. In this case, however, those who read about an interracial relationship between Erica and Anthony were about one third as likely to report that Erica had at least some responsibility for the experience than when Anthony and Erica were presented as both White and Black, therefore indicating slightly more attribution of responsibility when the victim-perpetrator relationship is interracial than when intraracial. The relationship between Anthony and Erica had no notable impact on the attribution of responsibility.

Although resistance strategies did have an impact on the attribution of responsibility for MTurkers, no other vignette variable was shown to be impacted however, the IRMAS-R subscale "she asked for it," respondents were 44% more likely to attribute responsibility to Erica when they scored an additional point on this subscale. For the student and military samples, one additional point on the subscale indicated that a respondent was about 54% and 58% more likely to attribute responsibility Erica, respectively.

Membership

Chi-square tests were conducted to examine the differences in MTurk and college respondents' answers to the dependent variables and respondents' membership in either a fraternity, sorority, or intercollegiate athletics (see Table 5).

Fraternity. Results demonstrated that membership in a fraternity had a negative impact on responses to all of the dependent variables in Segment 1. That is, fraternity members were 10% less likely than nonmembers to indicate that Erica was raped, 20% less likely to indicate that she should tell somebody, and they were 40% more likely to indicate that Erica was at least somewhat responsible. In Segment 2, results demonstrated that membership in a fraternity continued to have a negative impact on all but one of the dependent variables. Specifically, respondents who identified membership in a fraternity were less likely than those who do not belong to a fraternity to indicate that Erica was raped and that Erica is responsible. The results also indicate that the additional information provided in Segment 2 had a positive effect on reducing fraternity members' stigmatizing views about Erica's decision to report. Respondents who have membership

in a fraternity were no more likely to report that Erica should tell somebody about her experience after reading Erica's decision to report in the second segment.

Sorority. Chi-square analyses demonstrated that membership in a sorority had a negative impact on individuals' responses concerning Erica's responsibility for the experience and showed no impact on responses to whether Erica has been raped or if Erica should tell someone. Specifically, respondents who identified membership in a sorority were more likely to attribute Erica at least some responsibility for the experience than respondents not in a sorority. The results indicated that this trend continued into Segment 2, where those individuals not in a sorority were less likely to attribute Erica responsibility than sorority members.

Intercollegiate Athletics. Chi-square analyses demonstrated that being a member in intercollegiate athletics did not have an impact on whether respondents believed Erica had been raped but did have a negative impact on how respondents' attributed responsibility for the experience and if they thought Erica should tell somebody or not. In Segment 1 specifically, intercollegiate athletics members were more likely than non-members to attribute Erica responsibility and were less likely to believe Erica should tell somebody about her experience. In Segment 2, intercollegiate athletic members continued to be more likely than non-members to attribute Erica responsibility however, after reading about Erica's decision to report her experience to a friend, police, or no one, intercollegiate athletic members were no longer less likely than nonmembers to report that Erica should not tell anybody about her experience.

Military Responses for Reporting

Chi-square tests were conducted to examine the differences in military members' responses of which reporting mechanism they would use to report Erica's experience depending on if they were friends with Anthony or Erica (see Table 6). This decision was made to further investigate military members' decision to report after first discovering low variability in responses for the MTurk and student samples. Military respondents were only asked this question after indicating that Erica was raped after reading Segment 1. The idea was that if military members' already determined that Erica was raped, then there could be some implication for reporting this experience further. Results demonstrated that respondent gender as well as respondents' hypothetical friendship with Erica or Anthony did have an impact on the likelihood of reporting the experience to the police, a commanding officer, a supervisor, a mental health professional, or taking another approach. Specifically, male respondents who were randomly assigned as a friend of Erica were more likely than female respondents who were friends with either Erica or Anthony and male respondents who were friends with Anthony to report to a mental health professional ($\chi 2$ (3, N = 416) = 8.67, p = .034) or to take another action ($\chi 2$ (3, N = 416) = 8.67, p = .034). Male respondents who were randomly assigned as a friend of Anthony were more likely than males who were friends with Erica and female respondents who were friends with Erica or Anthony to report to the police ($\chi 2$ (3, N = 416) = 19.60, p = <.001), report to a commanding officer ($\chi 2$ (3, N = 416) = 7.80, p = .050), or report to a supervisor ($\chi 2$ (3, N = 416) = 15.49, p = .001).

Rational for Responses: Qualitative Results

Descriptive analyses were ran to assess the most frequently coded open-ended responses in each segment and by sample population (see Table 7). Rationales were provided to further explain respondent answers on the closed-ended questions remained somewhat consistent across segments.

Segment 1. The first segment of the vignette depicted a male and female at a party and after the female character passes out, a sexual victimization experience takes place. Respondents were asked if they accepted the experience as rape, how much responsibility to attribute to the female character, and if the female character should report her experience or not. Then respondents were asked to provide an open-ended rationale describing why they selected their answer.

Across all samples, respondents overwhelmingly reported that the scenario was rape, the female was at least somewhat responsible for the experience, and that she should tell someone about the experience. The top themes reported by respondents included consent (or any indication that Erica did not or could not consent to the sexual experience), that she should tell someone because of legal or criminal reasons (or that Anthony should face consequences for his actions), an acceptance of rape myths (or any indication that this experience could have been prevented if Erica had behaved differently), and a rejection of rape myths (or that this experience should not have happened regardless of Erica's decisions or actions). Additional themes included the mention of the relationship (or any indication about the level of familiarity between Anthony and Erica) and that she should tell someone for help/coping (or any indication that Erica should tell someone to get help coping with the experience).

Although military members were about half as likely to express concern about consent, they were also the least likely to provide rationales in line with accepting rape myths and those most likely to encourage help seeking behaviors, either emotionally or legally. Interestingly, student respondents were most likely to provide rationales that reject traditional rape myths however they were also the group least likely encourage help seeking byway of the criminal or legal system whereas MTurkers were most likely to accept rape myths by also mentioning the impact of the victim perpetrator relationship.

Segment 2. The second segment of the vignette continued the story of Anthony and Erica and introduced the variable of Erica's reporting decision. Specifically, respondents were informed that Erica reported the experience to the police, told a friend, or told nobody about the experience.

Across all samples, respondents continued to overwhelmingly report that the scenario was rape, that Erica was at least somewhat responsible for the experience, and that she should tell someone about the experience. The top themes reported by respondents in segment two again included that she should tell someone's because of legal or criminal reasons (or that Anthony should be punished for his actions) and consent (or any indication that Erica did not or could not consents). Additionally, respondents indicated that they disagreed with Erica's reporting decision (Erica should not have taken the observed action) and identified that she should tell someone for help or coping (or that respondent was concerned for Erica's mental, emotional, or physical state). Respondents also mentioned the relationship as justification for their answers, indicated an acceptance of rape myths, and indicated that the additional information provided did

not change their mind (or that Erica's decision to tell or not to tell anybody does not mean it was/was not rape).

In the second segment, although MTurkers were the group most likely to indicate that Erica should tell someone about her experience for legal reasons, they were also the group most likely to provide ambiguous acceptance of Erica's reporting decision. These ambiguous rationales, paired with the MTurker's susceptibility to want to report using the legal system may indicate that some of the disagreement they may feel with Erica's reporting decision is because she did not take steps to report to the legal system. MTurkers were also the group most likely to mention the relationship between Erica and Anthony as a reason for their closed-ended responses. Military respondents continued to be concerned with Erica's mental or emotional state at a greater magnitude than those respondents in the general or student sample. Interestingly, military respondents became the most concerned with consent following the second segment. The college sample was the most likely to indicate that no matter Erica's reporting decision, the value they attributed to the experience in the first segment did not change

Discussion

The results indicate that overall, respondents held relatively low RMA. It appears that some contextual factors within each subsample influence attitudes surrounding rape myths while others do not, specifically when the focus is on attributing responsibility for the experience. Victim–perpetrator race, pleading with Anthony, Erica reporting her experience to a friend, answers provided on the IRMAS-R subscales She Asked for It and It Wasn't Really Rape, respondent race, and respondent religious faith all influenced respondents tendency to place some responsibility on Erica. Further, membership in a

fraternity, sorority, or intercollegiate athletics also impacted how individuals responded to the closed-ended questions following each vignette segment. Respondent gender and hypothetical friendship with either Erica or Anthony also influenced whom respondents deemed appropriate to report the experience to. The following will provide a discussion of the results as it relates to all subsamples as well as overall.

Recognizing Rape

Respondents overwhelming ability to correctly identify Erica's sexual victimization experience as rape indicates that regardless of culture or background, most individuals are able to recognize a sexual victimization experience. Given the high rate of female respondents in the present study, of whom typically hold less RMA than their male counterparts (McMahon, 2010), this finding may be attributable, at least in part, to how each gender has traditionally viewed the experience of sexual assault. Not only are men and woman socialized differently when it comes to gender roles and behaviors but women are typically the victims of sexual assault (Maxwell & Scott, 2014) and the primary focus of most prevention efforts (Baynard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004). All of this combined–socialization, experience, and potential exposure to prevention efforts–can provide some indication as to why female respondents were able to correctly identify rape. Traditionally, men hold higher RMA than females (Burgess, 2007; McMahon, 2010) and although unlikely to directly blame the victim, often support underlying beliefs that the perpetrators are not fully to blame and/or victims may have acted in ways that contributed to the assault (McMahon, 2010). Acceptance of the more nuanced and deeply ingrained elements of RMA while outwardly rejecting overt incidences of sexual

violence may have contributed to male respondents' likelihood to correctly identify rape as such and is in accordance with the relevant literature (McMahon, 2010).

Attributing Responsibility

The present study also tested respondents' attributions of responsibility for the sexual victimization experience. Although respondents correctly identified the experience as rape and indicated that Erica should report her experience, respondents continued to place at least some responsibility on Erica for the experience across vignette segments and across subsamples. The following provides a discussion of the contextual factors that may have helped influence respondents tendency to attribute some responsibility to Erica.

Victim–perpetrator race. As hypothesized, the race of the victim, the race of the perpetrator, and the existence of interracial victim-perpetrator relationships influenced respondents' tendency to attribute responsibility to Erica, although this was only found in the military population. Specifically, in the first vignette respondents who saw a black intraracial couple and an interracial couple with a Black male and White female, were more likely to attribute responsibility to Erica. In the second segment, both interracial pairings seemed to influence respondents' tendency to attribute responsibility to the victim. Indeed, interracial rapes are often judged less favorable; oftentimes enticing more victim blame and less perpetrator responsibility potentially indicating an underlying racist bias that activates in the presence of interracial sexual relationships (George & Martinez, 2002). This could be related to the low acceptability of interracial relationships (Field, Kimuna, & Straus, 2013), or a tendency to disapprove of females who enter into interracial relationships (George & Martinez, 2002). As for the finding only being

relevant within the military sample, some would argue that race relations within the military are complementary of interracial relationships (Jacobson & Heaton, 2003) however, there is still evidence of institutional racism and racial bias against black individuals in promotional opportunities, the administration of military justice, and access to the VA healthcare system (Burk & Espinoza, 2012). Although race relations have improved in some aspects, it seems that the military justice system and healthcare system may not be particularly receptive to minority victims, inadvertently maintaining racist biases.

Victim–perpetrator relationship. The hypothesis stating that RMA will be inversely related to the closeness of the victim–perpetrator relationship was not supported. Contrary to previous findings (Pendersen & Stromwall, 2013), the results indicated that the victim-perpetrator relationship did not have any impact on attributing Erica responsibility for the experience. This finding could be evidence of shift in who people conceptualize as rapists or be related to other contextual factors within the vignette (i.e., alcohol) that have been known to influence attitudes relating to sexual assault and sexual assault reporting (Fuertes & Hoffman, 2016; Wessely et al., 2007). Although marital rape is perceived to be less severe, less violent, less psychologically damaging, and less of a violation of the victim than the other victim–perpetrator relationships explored in this study (Simonson & Subich, 1999), the majority of respondents in all samples were able to correctly identify that Erica was indeed raped, regardless of the amount of responsibility respondents placed on Erica for the experience. This may help to reveal an interesting theme where if rape is thought to have taken place, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is of no importance. Although this does not help to enhance the

recovery process following an assault, this pattern may have something to say about the general publics perception regarding the victim-perpetrator relationship.

Resistance strategies. Hypotheses concerning resistance strategies were somewhat supported when respondents saw Erica plead with Anthony, utilizing the nonforceful resistance strategy. In the MTurk sample, respondents were more likely to attribute responsibility to Erica when she pleaded with her attacker than if she had ran away from him. We can therefore conclude, at least for the MTurk sample, that more RMA exists in the form of victim blaming when there is nonforceful verbal resistance. One explanation for this could have to do with the interconnectedness of victims' tendency to report or not based on the existence of physical injuries and law enforcements officers tendency to look for physical evidence when legitimizing reports of rape or sexual assault (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016; Lisak & Miller, 2010). Perhaps the myth that rape is violent and results in physical injury (Maxwell & Scott, 2014) is still prevalent within the general public and allows respondents to question if the experience was rape or not depending on if a resistance strategy was used.

Decision to report. Although the hypotheses for resistance strategies were not fully supported by the data, college students were more likely to attribute Erica responsibility when they read that Erica told a friend about her experience. There are numerous barriers to legitimizing a report to the police and can include the time that has passed since the alleged assault occurred, the presence of alcohol or drugs, and the perceived relationship between the victim and the perpetrator (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016; Lonsway, 2010). Contemporary findings have also shown that the fear of revictimization that can deter individuals from reporting assault (Maxwell & Scott, 2014).

Although all of these combined do not explain college students tendency to ascribe blame to Erica after reading that she told a friend about the experience, perhaps they can provide context for the large amount of evidence victims' must provide for their claim to be seen as legitimate. Not only are victims asked to provide physical and timely evidence for their claims (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016), there is an element of self-judgment that can occur when disclosing potentially stigmatizing information (Kelly et al., 2013). Perhaps the victim disclosing this experience to a friend but not somebody with disciplinary power reinforces judgment that the individual is partially to blame.

Victim blame and perpetrator exoneration. Although individuals do not typically engage in overt acceptance of RMA, there is a tendency to subscribe to more covert acceptance of rape myths that place some of the blame on the victim while alleviating the perpetrator of responsibility (McMahon, 2010). In the present study, it was found that individuals were more likely to ascribe responsibility to the victim when they scored high on the IRMAS-R subscale She Asked for It, indicating that the victims behavior invited the sexual victimization experience (McMahon, 2010). This finding was found to be true across all populations and across both segments and was supported by the open-ended rationales (i.e., Acceptance of Rape Myths).

One possible explanation is the tendency and cultural expectation that females initiate self-protective behaviors to guard against sexual assault rather than an expectation that men do not rape (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2014; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies Pollard, & Archer, 2001, Masters, 2010; Maxwell & Scott, 2014). Instead, women are told to wear conservative clothing, not to go out alone at night, and to use the buddy system. When these prevention efforts fail and a sexual assault occurs, the victim

is often left wondering what they could have done differently to prevent the experience (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). Narratives that ascertain women are incapable of protecting themselves can be especially discerning for servicewomen, given that soldiers are held to a high physical standard. Belonging in a masculine culture can help to reinforce gender stereotypes that maintain women are physically vulnerable (Weitz, 2015) and could explain why respondents in the military attributed Erica with responsibility when they scored high on this subscale.

Another explanation could be that the presence of alcohol and/or drugs during an assault decreases an individuals' likelihood of reporting the assault (Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2011) perhaps due to a perceived lack of victim credibility (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016; Lonsway, 2010). Although this is true in the general population, this seems to be especially prevalent in college students (Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2011). In cultures where there is a high intake of alcohol, this becomes a high-risk environment for sexual assault to occur possibly because of the ambiguity that comes along with engaging in high risk behaviors (Fuertes & Hoffman, 2016; Wessely et al., 2007). Unique to the college sample, when individuals scored high on the IRMAS-R subscale *It Wasn't Really Rape,* which denies the occurrence of sexual assault by blaming of the victim and/or exonerating the perpetrator (McMahon, 2010), they were more likely to attribute responsibility to Erica. One possible explanation is the existence of a reverse-victim stance that places the perpetrator under the control of the victim and accounts for extraneous circumstances (i.e., alcohol use) that minimize the dangers of sex within certain contextual situations (Burgess, 2007). Following this narrative, respondents may justify the occurrence of the sexual act because there were various contextual factors in

place that allows the perpetrator to share the blame. Perhaps high exposure to high risk environments that invite these norms in turn cultivate and maintain these schematic representations, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Respondent characteristics. Respondents in the MTurk sample who identified as Black/non-Hispanic and respondents in the Military sample who practice the Islamic faith were more likely to attribute Erica with some responsibility when compared to White, non-Hispanics and Atheists, respectively. Higher levels of RMA are typically associated with higher levels of other oppressive beliefs such as racism and religious intolerance (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Having a strong racial identity is also associated with lower acceptance of rape myths (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010).

Decision to Report

The study also tested respondents' ability to decide whether or not a victim of sexual assault is obligated to report their experience or not. The high rate of respondents who identified that Erica should report her experience to somebody was of great interest because it is in direct opposition to the low reporting rates in the general population (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). This suggests that although individuals' believe that reporting should be done after a sexual victimization experience, this attitude may only exist in hypothetical scenarios rather than when a rape or sexual assault occurs in real life. Indeed, social desirability bias may explain the difference in how individuals behave in reality and how individuals respond to a survey on norms surrounding sexual assault; underreporting potentially stigmatizing behaviors (i.e., no report) while over reporting normative behaviors (i.e., report; Kelly et al., 2013). If this is the case, further

investigation into what influences an individual to make a report following sexual assault should be conducted in an effort to encourage more reporting with less revictimization.

For some, the prospect of reporting seems acceptable however, the avenues in place to make reports are not always conventional or perceived helpful by the victim. For example, research suggests that reporting is more likely when sexual victimization occurs in a stereotypical context (i.e., stranger rape & sustained physical injury; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, Amstadter, McCauley, Ruggiero, & Kilpatrick, 2011) but, the sexual assault literature suggests that perpetrators are usually known to the victim (McMahon, 2010) and that woman who do not engage in resistance strategies are least likely to sustain physical injury (Wong & Balemba, 2016). Here, it is important to note that only a quarter of women report engaging in these resistance strategies (Edwards et al., 2014) and so the majority of women may not sustain injuries deemed severe enough to warrant a legitimate rape investigation (Venama, 2014).

Membership

Although not hypothesized, results indicate that membership in intercollegiate athletics, fraternities, and sororities influenced respondents' responses regarding the decision if Erica was raped or not, if Erica was responsible, and if she should tell someone about her experience. Fraternity members have been shown to have more variability in the levels of RMA as compared to sorority members meaning that men in these organizations typically endorse a more variety of rape myths (Carroll et al., 2016). This seems to be especially relevant in the context of the present study because not only were fraternity members more likely than nonmembers to provide negative responses to the close-ended questions, they also did so more often than sorority members, and this

remained consistent across vignette segments. Respondents who identified as being apart of intercollegiate athletics were also more likely to provide negative responses to the close-ended questions more often than sorority members. One possible explanation that RMA occurs in intercollegiate and fraternity membership in greater frequency than in sororities could be because these environments celebrate aggression and competition as well as the sexual exploitation of women (Martin, 2016) while devaluing feminine qualities (Carroll et al., 2016). Additionally, the threat of rape and sexual assault appears more relevant and pressing for woman as they go about their daily lives than it does for men (Carroll et al., 201), further exacerbating RMA by respondents in male-dominated contexts.

Respondent Gender and Reporting Standards

A surprising, although unexpected finding emerged from the military sample concerning respondent gender and how likely respondents would be to report the assault using various reporting avenues depending on a hypothetical friendship with either character in the vignette. Surprisingly, regardless of hypothetical friendship with either the victim or the perpetrator within the scenario, male respondents were more likely than female respondents to report the experience to a mental health professional, the police, a commanding officer, or a supervisor. This finding was interesting because men typically hold higher RMA than woman (McMahon, 2010) and are often less prepared to intervene in situations of overt sexual violence (Exner & Cummings, 2011) however male respondents were the ones indicating they would report this experience to someone. One possible explanation for this finding may be related to rhetorical strategies often displayed by men to help combat sexual violence. For instance, male respondents

willingness to, essentially, report Anthony could have to do with their tendency to want to distance themselves from a someone considered a rapist (Masters, 2011). A possible explanation as to why female respondents were less likely to indicate they would report the experience any further may have influence from the masculine culture in which they inhabit. Perhaps servicewomen feel they have more to lose if they were to report on a sexual victimization experience (Mengeling et al., 2014) regardless if it is their own or not (Kimerling et al., 2010).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the extent to which rape myth acceptance varies according to four key contextual factors—race, the victim–perpetrator relationship, resistance strategies, and the decision to report—among those embedded within college and military cultures. Although sexual assault in a university context has been thoroughly investigated, it is typically in comparison to the general population that may not share the same high-risk elements that promote the environment for sexual assault. Therefore, comparisons of college, military, and a general populations were sampled to better understand the attitudes that maintain RMA in these high risk environments. Consistent with previous research aimed at understanding attitudes associated with RMA (Carroll et al., 2016; McMahon, 2010), findings from this study indicated that although individuals hold relatively low RMA overall, individuals tend to endorse other rape myths that blame the victim and exonerate the perpetrator. Specifically, race, resistance strategies, and the decision to report all influenced how likely individuals were to attribute some blame to the victim in the vignette. It seems that

these contextual factors are embedded within larger institutional systems that work to invalidate victim experiences.

Further research should focus on creating sexual assault prevention programs that take into account the variables that maintain victim blaming. In particular, more research should explore how membership in traditionally masculine organizations cultivates an environment that is accepting of sexual victimization a victim blame. Furthermore, particular attention should be dedicated to the experiences of male victims and exploration into how contextual factors vary based on victim and perpetrator gender.

Table 1
Sample Demographics Within Each Subsample

Characteristic	MTurk (*n* =725)		College students (*n* = 1,321)		Military (*n* = 420)	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Gender						
Female	416	57.4	949	71.8	171	40.7
Male	302	41.7	360	27.3	246	59.0
Other	7	1.0	12	0.9	3	0.7
Race or ethnicity						
Asian	43	5.9	56	4.2	14	3.3
Black, non-Hispanic	56	7.7	77	5.8	54	12.9
Hispanic	36	5.0	37	2.8	37	8.8
Pacific Islander	29	4.0	30	2.3	15	3.6
White, non-Hispanic	541	74.6	1,071	81.1	278	66.2
Mixed	20	2.8	50	3.8	22	5.2
Religion						
Agnostic	139	19.2	137	10.4	49	11.7
Atheist	80	11.0	89	6.7	29	6.9
Catholic	171	23.6	328	24.8	77	18.3
Islamic	6	0.8	21	1.6	2	0.5
Jewish	17	2.3	9	0.7	1	0.2
Protestant, Evangelical	90	12.4	226	17.1	68	16.2
Protestant, Mainline	146	20.1	304	23.0	103	24.5
Other	76	10.5	207	15.7	91	21.7
Religiosity						
Very religious	117	16.1	238	18.0	41	9.8
Somewhat religious	202	27.9	440	33.3	128	30.5
Slightly religious	110	15.2	280	21.2	105	25.0
Not at all religious	296	40.8	321	24.3	146	34.8
Education						
Did not complete high school	3	0.4	-	-	2	0.5
High school diploma (or GED)	79	10.9	272	20.6	1	22.1
1 year of college (no degree)	57	7.9	217	16.4	57	13.6
2 years of college (no degree)	82	11.3	257	19.5	48	11.4
Associates degree	95	13.1	42	3.2	59	14.0
3 years of college (no degree)	15	2.1	310	23.5	23	5.5
4 years of college (no degree)	71	9.8	130	9.8	5	1.2
Bachelor's degree	209	28.8	86	6.5	86	20.5
Master's degree	98	12.8	4	0.3	44	10.5
Doctorate	21	2.9	3	0.2	5	1.2

Table 2

Percentage of Responses for Each Dependent Variable Within Each Subsample

	MTurk (n = 725)		Students (n = 1,321)		Military (n = 420)				
Response options	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	χ^2 (2)	φ	*p*
Segment 1									
Has been raped	657	90.6	1,285	97.3	403	96.0	45.22	0.14	<.001
Is responsible	451	62.2	986	74.6	302	71.9	35.28	0.12	<.001
Should tell someone	653	90.1	1,290	97.7	408	97.1	64.28	0.16	<.001
Segment 2									
Has been raped	664	91.6	1,299	98.3	409	97.4	60.11	0.16	<.001
Is responsible	273	37.7	332	25.1	113	26.9	36.77	0.12	<.001
Should tell someone	657	90.6	1,297	98.2	408	97.1	68.59	0.17	<.001

Table 3

Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Whether Erica is Responsible for Her Experience (Segment 1)

	MTurk (n = 725) *At least some responsibility* = 37.9%					Students (n = 1,321) *At least some responsibility* = 25.4%					Military (n = 420) *At least some responsibility* = 28.1%				
Predictor	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI
Vignette variables															
Relationship(strangers)															
Dating	0.02	0.29	.929	1.02	[0.58, 1.81]	0.24	0.24	.332	1.27	[0.79, 2.04]	0.33	0.44	.453	1.39	[0.59, 3.28]
Friends	0.12	0.30	.650	1.14	[0.58, 1.81]	-0.13	0.25	.602	0.88	[0.54, 1.43]	0.07	0.42	.878	1.07	[0.46, 2.45]
Married	0.19	0.29	.514	1.21	[0.68, 2.15]	0.11	0.24	.639	1.12	[0.70, 1.79]	0.14	0.44	.758	1.15	[0.48, 2.72]
Race(White male/White female)															
White male/Black female	-0.14	029	.623	0.87	[0.49, 1.52]	0.41	0.24	.090	1.51	[0.94, 2.44]	-0.77	0.43	.075	0.46	[0.20, 1.08]
Black male/Black female	-0.11	0.29	.692	0.89	[0.51, 1.56]	-0.22	0.25	.387	0.81	[0.49, 1.31]	-0.87	0.42	.041	0.42	[0.18, 0.97]
Black male/White female	-0.35	0.30	.274	0.71	[0.39, 1.27]	0.26	0.25	.286	1.30	[0.80, 2.10]	-1.34	0.47	.004	0.26	[0.10, 0.65]
Resistance strategy(runs away)															
Kicks	-0.22	0.28	.437	0.80	[0.46, 1.40]	-0.14	0.25	.586	0.87	[0.53, 1.43]	0.05	0.45	.907	1.05	[0.44, 2.53]
Pleads	-0.45	0.29	.124	0.64	[0.36, 1.13]	0.12	0.25	.634	1.13	[0.69, 1.85]	-0.11	0.44	.802	0.90	[0.38, 2.13]
Yells	0.28	0.29	.338	0.75	[0.43, 1.34]	0.23	0.25	.341	1.26	[0.78, 2.05]	0.04	0.47	.940	1.04	[1.04, 2.59]
Respondent characteristics															
Female(male)	-0.12	0.22	.582	0.89	[0.58, 1.36]	-0.09	0.20	.649	0.91	[0.62, 1.35]	-0.08	0.36	.824	0.92	[0.46, 1.86]
Sexual Victimization Experience(none)	0.26	0.21	.205	1.30	[0.87, 1.96]	-0.08	0.18	.642	0.92	[0.64, 1.31]	-0.22	0.33	.508	0.80	[0.42, 1.53]
Race or ethnicity(White, non-Hispanic)															
Asian	0.49	0.44	.263	1.63	[0.69, 1.85]	-0.03	0.41	.934	0.97	[0.44, 2.14]	0.24	0.92	.793	1.27	[0.21, 7.78]
Black/non-Hispanic	0.93	0.37	.012	2.53	[1.22, 5.24]	0.63	0.36	.078	1.87	[0.93, 3.75]	-0.30	0.53	.565	0.74	[0.26, 2.07]
Hispanic	0.56	0.48	.245	1.75	[0.68, 4.48]	0.35	0.51	.499	1.42	[0.52, 3.87]	-0.10	0.57	.867	0.91	[0.30, 2.79]
Alaskan, Hawaiian	-	0.5	.17	0.5	[0.18,	-	0.7	.288	0.4	[0.12,	-	0.9	.88	0.8	[0.13,

	0.70	2	9	0	1.38]	0.74	0	8	1.87]	0.14	7	1	7	5.76]
Mixed	-0.28	0.78	.725	0.76	[0.17, 3.50]	0.15	0.45	.743	1.16	[0.48, 2.83]	0.49	0.61	.420	1.63	[0.50, 5.37]
Religion[(Atheist)]															
Catholic	0.09	0.45	.847	1.09	[0.45, 2.62]	0.19	0.44	.667	1.21	[0.51, 2.84]	0.38	0.79	.630	1.46	[0.31, 6.90]
Mainline Protestant	-0.09	0.46	.846	0.91	[0.37, 2.26]	-0.18	0.46	.693	0.84	[0.34, 2.04]	0.54	0.77	.485	1.71	[0.38, 7.74]
Islamic	-1.53	1.31	.242	0.22	[0.02, 2.81]	0.88	0.81	.276	2.42	[0.49, 11.92]	NA				.
Jewish	0.11	0.81	.897	1.11	[0.23, 5.47]	-0.19	1.42	.891	0.82	[0.05, 13.27]	NA				
Other	-0.10	0.49	.836	0.90	[0.35, 2.35]	-0.13	0.44	.768	0.88	[0.37, 2.09]	0.77	0.74	.298	2.17	[0.51, 9.28]
Evangelical Protestant	0.14	0.51	.788	1.15	[0.42, 3.12]	-0.24	0.48	.618	0.79	[0.31, 2.01]	0.31	0.82	.710	1.36	[0.27, 6.76]
Agnostic	-0.25	0.42	.551	0.78	[0.35, 2.35]	-0.36	0.48	.456	0.70	[0.27, 1.79]	0.43	0.79	.587	1.53	[0.33, 7.14]
Religiosity	-0.15	0.13	.231	0.86	[0.67, 1.10]	-0.11	0.10	.283	0.90	[0.74, 1.09]	0.02	0.19	.901	1.02	[0.71, 1.48]
Education	0.14	0.04	.752	1.01	[0.93, 1.10]	0.08	0.05	.131	1.08	[0.98, 1.19]	-0.10	0.07	.180	0.91	[0.79, 1.04]
Age	-0.01	0.01	.302	0.99	[0.98, 1.01]	0.00	0.02	.949	1.00	[9.96, 1.04]	0.01	0.02	.658	1.01	[0.98, 1.04]
RMAS subscale															
She asked for it	0.35	0.03	< .001	1.42	[1.33, 1.52]	0.44	0.03	< .01	1.55	[1.46, 1.65]	0.44	0.06	< .01	1.56	[1.39, 1.74]
He didn't mean to	-0.26	0.03	.368	0.97	[0.92, 1.03]	-0.05	0.03	.073	0.95	[0.91, 1.00]	-0.04	0.05	.378	0.96	[0.88, 1.05]
It wasn't really rape	-0.02	0.03	.814	0.99	[0.93, 1.06]	-0.10	0.04	.012	0.91	[0.84, 0.98]	-0.05	0.07	.473	0.95	[0.84, 1.08]
She lied	-0.05	0.03	.068	0.95	[0.89, 1.00]	0.02	0.03	.531	1.02	[0.96, 1.07]	-0.07	0.05	.148	0.94	[0.85, 1.02]

Note. Reference category in parentheses. CI = confidence interval for odds ratio (*OR*).

Table 3 (continued)

Table 4

Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Whether Erica is Responsible for Her Experience (Segment 2)

Predictor	MTurk sample (n = 725) *At Least Some Responsibility* = 37.7%					Student sample (n = 1,321) *At Least Some Responsibility* = 25.1%					Military sample (n = 420) *At Least Some Responsibility* = 26.9%				
	B	*SE*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI
Vignette variables															
Relationship(strangers)															
Dating	0.35	0.29	.232	1.42	[0.80, 2.53]	0.41	0.25	.097	1.51	[0.93, 2.45]	-0.17	0.45	.709	0.85	[0.35, 2.03]
Friends	0.15	0.30	.613	1.16	[0.65, 2.10]	0.11	0.25	.668	1.11	[0.68, 1.81]	0.12	0.42	.778	1.13	[0.50, 2.55]
Married	0.27	0.30	.379	1.30	[0.72, 2.35]	0.05	0.25	.846	1.05	[0.65, 1.70]	0.01	0.44	.977	1.01	0.43, 2.38]
Race(White male/White female)															
White male/Black female	-0.27	0.30	.360	0.76	[0.43, 1.36]	0.44	0.25	.071	1.56	[0.96, 2.53]	-1.09	0.45	.015	0.34	[0.14, 0.81]
Black male/Black female	0.13	0.29	.655	1.14	[0.64, 2.02]	-0.30	0.25	.234	0.74	[0.45, 1.22]	-0.76	0.42	.074	0.47	[0.20, 1.08]
Black male/White female	-0.21	0.31	.504	0.81	[0.45, 1.49]	0.21	0.25	.401	1.23	[0.76, 2.00]	-1.06	0.46	.021	0.35	[0.14, 0.85]
Resistance strategy(runs away)															
Kicks	-0.29	0.29	.318	0.75	[0.43, 1.32]	-0.03	0.25	.898	0.97	[0.59, 1.59]	0.29	0.45	.516	1.34	[0.55, 3.24]
Pleads	-0.60	0.30	.043	0.55	[0.30, 0.98]	0.15	0.26	.560	1.16	[0.70, 1.92]	-0.08	0.45	.852	0.92	[0.38, 2.22]
Yells	-0.31	0.30	.299	0.73	[0.41, 1.32]	0.29	0.25	.244	1.34	[0.82, 2.17]	0.30	0.47	.526	1.35	[0.54, 3.37]
Report(tell noone)															
Report to the police	-0.17	0.25	.499	0.84	[0.51, 1.38]	-0.24	0.21	.265	0.79	[0.52, 1.20]	0.37	0.36	.303	1.45	[0.72, 2.93]
Tell a friend	-0.39	0.25	.124	0.68	[0.41, 1.11]	-0.48	0.22	.028	0.62	[0.40, 0.95]	-0.33	0.39	.396	0.72	[0.33, 1.55]
Respondent characteristics															
Female(male)	-0.15	0.22	.488	0.86	[0.55, 1.33]	0.15	0.21	.452	1.17	[0.78, 1.75]	-0.18	0.36	.608	0.83	[0.41, 1.68]
Sexual Victimization Experience(none)	0.11	0.21	.592	1.12	[0.74, 1.69]	-0.09	0.19	.631	0.91	[0.64, 1.32]	-0.36	0.33	.267	0.69	[0.37, 1.32]
Race or ethnicity(White,															

non-Hispanic)															
Asian	0.60	0.45	.181	1.83	[0.76, 4.41]	0.54	0.41	.192	1.72	[0.76, 3.85]	-1.15	0.93	.218	0.32	[0.05, 1.98]
Black/non-Hispanic	0.06	0.39	.870	1.07	[0.50, 2.29]	0.48	0.37	.190	1.61	[0.79, 3.30]	-0.18	0.51	.723	0.83	[0.31, 2.28]
Hispanic	0.88	0.48	.066	2.42	[0.94, 6.20]	0.32	0.52	.542	1.37	[0.50, 3.77]	-0.73	0.61	.230	0.48	[0.15, 1.59]
Alaskan, Hawaiian	-0.50	0.50	.326	0.61	[0.23, 1.64]	-0.81	0.71	.251	0.44	[0.11, 1.77]	-1.17	1.08	.278	0.31	[0.04, 2.58]
Mixed	-0.24	0.80	.758	0.78	[0.16, 3.72]	-0.03	0.46	.956	0.97	[0.39, 2.42]	0.21	0.60	.726	1.24	[0.38, 4.03]
Religion(Atheist)															
Catholic	0.44	0.46	.336	1.55	[0.63, 3.82]	0.09	0.44	.830	1.10	[0.46, 2.60]	-0.26	0.73	.726	0.77	[0.18, 3.25]
Mainline Protestant	0.07	0.48	.884	1.07	[0.42, 2.73]	-0.20	0.46	.668	0.82	[0.33, 2.02]	-0.36	0.72	.617	0.70	[0/17, 2.87]
Islamic	-1.24	1.28	.335	0.29	[0.02, 3.59]	1.35	0.83	.105	3.85	[0.75, 19.68]	-5.77	1.95	.003	0.00	[0.00, 0.14]
Jewish	0.15	0.82	.854	1.16	[0.23, 5.76]	0.08	1.38	.953	1.08	[0.07, 16.15]	NA				
Other	-0.01	0.51	.981	0.99	[0.36, 2.69]	0.09	0.44	.845	1.09	[0.46, 2.58]	0.23	0.68	.734	1.26	[0.33, 4.83]
Evangelical Protestant	0.31	0.53	.551	1.37	[0.49, 3.84]	-0.10	0.48	.828	0.90	[0.35, 2.31]	-0.46	0.76	.550	0.63	[0.14, 2.83]
Agnostic	0.06	0.42	.881	1.07	[0.46, 2.44]	-0.09	0.47	.853	0.92	[0.36, 2.32]	-0.24	0.71	.737	0.79	[0.19, 3.19]
Religiosity	-0.11	0.13	.409	0.90	[0.69, 1.16]	-0.03	0.10	.765	0.97	[0.80, 1.18]	0.08	0.19	.690	1.08	[0.74, 1.58]
Education	0.05	0.04	.305	1.05	[0.96, 1.14]	0.09	0.05	.094	1.09	[0.99, 1.21]	-0.10	0.07	.174	0.91	[0.79, 1.04]
Age	-0.01	0.01	.214	0.99	[0.97, 1.01]	0.00	0.02	.974	1.00	[0.96, 1.04]	0.00	0.02	.911	1.00	[0.97, 1.03]
RMAS subscale															
She asked for it	0.37	0.04	< .001	1.44	[1.35, 1.55]	0.43	0.03	< .001	1.54	[1.45, 1.64]	0.46	0.06	< .001	1.58	[1.41, 1.77]
He didn't mean to	-0.03	0.03	.292	0.97	[0.91, 1.03]	-0.04	0.03	.174	0.96	[0.92, 1.02]	-0.07	0.05	.122	0.93	[0.85, 1.02]
It wasn't really rape	-0.01	0.03	.871	0.99	[0.93, 1.06]	-0.06	0.04	.136	0.94	[0.87, 1.02]	-0.11	0.07	.088	0.89	[0.78, 1.02]
She lied	-0.05	0.03	.068	0.95	[0.89, 1.00]	0.01	0.03	.631	1.01	[0.96, 1.07]	-0.06	0.05	.208	0.94	[0.86, 1.03]

Note. Reference category in parentheses. CI = confidence interval for odds ratio (*OR*).

Table 4 (continued)

Table 5
Percentage of Responses for Membership in MTurk and College Sample

	Non-member		Member				
Responses	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	χ^2 (1)	φ	*p*
Fraternity	1840		206				
Segment 1							
Has been raped	1,758	95.5	184	89.3	14.87	.09	< .001
Is responsible	530	28.8	79	38.3	8.07	.06	.004
Should tell someone	1,758	95.5	185	89.8	12.76	.08	< .001
Segment 2							
Has been raped	1,771	96.3	192	93.2	4.42	.05	.036
Is responsible	526	28.6	79	38.3	8.48	.06	.004
Should tell someone	1,761	95.7	193	93.7	1.76	.03	.185
Sorority	1,580		466				
Segment 1							
Has been raped	1.492	94.4	16	3.4	3.40	.04	.065
Is responsible	495	31.3	114	24.5	8.11	.06	.004
Should tell someone	1,502	95.1	441	94.6	0.14	.01	.710
Segment 2							
Has been raped	1,510	95.6	453	97.2	2.49	.03	.115
Is responsible	497	31.5	108	23.2	11.85	.08	.001
Should tell someone	1,507	95.4	447	95.9	0.25	.01	.619
Intercollegiate Athletics	1,767		279				
Segment 1							
Has been raped	1,682	95.2	260	93.2	2.00	.03	.158
Is responsible	504	28.5	105	37.6	9.57	.07	.002
Should tell someone	1,685	95.4	258	92.5	4.20	.05	.040
Segment 2							
Has been raped	1,701	96.3	262	93.9	3.44	.04	.064
Is responsible	503	28.5	102	36.6	7.58	.06	.006
Should tell someone	1,689	95.6	265	95.0	0.20	.01	.651

Table 6

Percentage of Responses for Reporting Depending on Respondent Gender and If Respondent was Friend with Erica or Anthony

Rationales	Female respondent, friend of Erica (n = 81)		Male respondent, friend of Erica (n = 137)		Female respondent, friend of Anthony (n = 90)		Male respondent, friend of Anthony (n = 108)				
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	$\chi 2$ (3)	ϕ	*p*
Report to Judge Advocate General (JAG)	9	11.1	22	16.1	15	16.7	26	24.1	5.80	.12	.122
Report to police	19	23.5	61	44.5	23	25.6	51	47.2	19.60	.22	< .001
Report to a commanding officer	15	19.5	40	29.2	19	21.1	37	34.3	7.80	.14	.050
Report to a supervisor	14	17.0	36	26.3	29	32.2	46	42.6	15.49	.19	.001
Tell a friend	2	2.5	8	5.8	6	6.7	7	6.5	1.89	.07	.596
Tell a mental health professional	9	11.1	28	20.4	9	10.0	10	9.3	8.67	.14	.034
Keep quiet to protect my friend	9	11.1	9	6.6	4	4.4	4	3.7	4.99	.11	.173
Other	9	11.1	28	20.4	9	10.0	10	9.3	8.67	.14	.034

Note. Genderqueer eliminated from analysis because of small sample size (n = 4).

Table 7
Most Common Rationales for Segment 1 and Segment 2

	MTurk (*n* = 725)		Students (*n* = 1,318)		Military (*n* =420)				
Rationales	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	χ^2 (2)	φ	*p*
Segment 1									
Consent	404	55.7	802	60.8	122	29.0	131.00	.23	< .001
She should tell someone (legal/crime)	187	25.8	174	13.2	110	26.2	64.30	.16	< .001
Acceptance of rape myths	145	20.0	247	18.7	57	13.6	7.87	.06	.020
Rejection of rape myths	122	16.8	333	25.3	62	14.8	31.93	.11	< .001
Mention of relationship	116	16.0	199	15.1	41	9.8	9.32	.06	.009
She should tell someone (help/coping)	58	8.0	154	11.7	68	16.2	17.99	.09	< .001
Segment 2									
She should tell someone (legal/crime)	178	24.6	130	9.9	66	15.7	78.46	.18	< .001
Consent	142	19.6	197	14.9	88	21.0	11.64	.07	.003
Disagrees with Erica's reporting decision	85	11.7	42	3.2	23	5.5	59.94	.16	< .001
She should tell someone (help/coping)	83	11.4	183	13.9	70	16.7	6.29	.05	.043
Additional information does not change	79	10.9	183	13.9	32	7.6	12.95	.07	.002
Mention of relationship	73	10.1	67	5.1	35	8.3	18.77	.09	< .001
Agrees with Erica's reporting decision	72	9.9	94	7.1	36	8.6	4.96	.04	.084
Acceptance of rape myths	60	8.3	74	5.6	31	7.4	5.68	.05	.059

Appendix A

Figure 1. Vignette characters

Appendix B

Informed Consent

You are being invited to take part in a research study about sexuality. You are being invited to this study because you are enrolled as an undergraduate at the University of Kentucky. Your response is highly valued and will contribute to research that may improve our understanding of sexual exploration.

We hope to receive completed questionnaires from about 1,000 UK undergraduates in total. Of course, you have a choice about whether or not to complete the questionnaire, but if you do participate, you may skip questions or discontinue at any time.

The questionnaire will take about 10–15 minutes to complete.

Your responses to the survey are confidential which means your names will not appear on any research documents, or be used in presentations or publications. The research team will not know that any information you provided came from you.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Alyssa Campbell at Alyssa.Campbell@uky.edu, or his supervisor, Dr. Jason Hans at Jason.Hans@uky.edu. If you have complaints, suggestions, or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please contact the staff in the University of Kentucky Office of Research Integrity at 859-257-9428 or toll-free at 1-866-400-9428.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important research study.

Appendix C

Revised Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
Subscale 1: She asked for it					
1. If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.					
2. When girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble.					
3. If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped.					
4. If a girl acts like a slut, eventually she is going to get into trouble.					
5. When girls get raped, it's often because the way they said "no" was unclear.					
6. If a girl initiates kissing or hooking up, she should not be surprised if a guy assumes she wants to have sex.					
Subscale 2: He didn't mean to					
7. When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex.					
8. Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.					
9. Rape happens when a guy's sex drive goes out of control.					
10. If a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally.					
11. It shouldn't be considered rape if a guy is drunk and didn't realize what he was doing.					
12. If both people are drunk, it can't be rape.					
Subscale 3: It wasn't really rape					
13. If a girl doesn't physically resist sex—even if protesting verbally—it can't be considered rape.					
14. If a girl doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape.					
15. A rape probably doesn't happen if a girl doesn't have any bruises or marks.					
16. If the accused "rapist" doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it rape.					
17. If a girl doesn't say "no" she can't claim rape.					
Subscale 4: She lied					
18. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.					
19. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys.					
20. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets.					
21. A lot of times, girls who claim they were raped have					

emotional problems.					
22. Girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim it was rape.					

Appendix D

Demographics

1. Select your birth month
    a. January
    b. February
    c. March
    d. April
    e. May
    f. June
    g. July
    h. August
    i. September
    j. October
    k. November
    l. December

2. Select your birth year

3. With which of the following gender identities do you most closely identify?
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Genderqueer
    d. Questioning or unsure
    e. Another gender (please specify)

4. With which of the following racial and ethnic classifications do you identity? Select all that apply.
    a. American Indian or Alaska Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Hispanic or Latino
    e. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    f. White or Caucasian
    g. Another racial or ethnic identification (please identify

5. Select the highest level of education you have completed
    a. Did not complete High School
    b. High School diploma (or GED)
    c. 1 year of college (but no degree)
    d. 2 years of college (but no degree)
    e. Associates degree
    f. 3 years of college (but no degree)
    g. 4 years of college (but no degree)
    h. Bachelor's degree
    i. Master's degree
    j. Doctorate

6. Which of the following best describes your religious preference?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Islamic
    d. Jewish
    e. Something else

7. How would you describe your religious preference?
    a. Agnostic
    b. Atheist
    c. Baptist - Unspecified
    d. Baptist - Northern
    e. Baptist - Southern
    f. Congregational
    g. Episcopalian-Anglican
    h. Fundamentalist
    i. Jehovah's Witness
    j. Lutheran
    k. Methodist
    l. Mormon/LDS
    m. Non-Denominational
    n. Pentecostal
    o. Presbyterian
    p. Quaker
    q. RLDS
    r. Seventh Day Adventist

s. Unitarian
t. Wiccan
u. None

8. Which denomination?
    a. Baptist - Unspecified
    b. Baptist - Northern
    c. Baptist - Southern
    d. Congregational
    e. Episcopalian-Anglican
    f. Fundamentalist
    g. Jehovah's Witness
    h. Lutheran
    i. Methodist
    j. Mormon/LDS
    k. Non-Denominational
    l. Pentecostal
    m. Presbyterian
    n. Quaker
    o. RLDS
    p. Seventh Day Adventist
    q. Something else

9. Would you say that you are . . .
    a. Very religious
    b. Somewhat religious
    c. Slightly religious
    d. Not religious

10. Have you or anyone that you know ever experienced sexual assault (to the best of your knowledge)?
    a. Yes
    b. No

11. Are you (or have you ever been) a member of one of the following? Select all that apply.
    a. Fraternity
    b. Sorority

c. Intercollegiate athletics

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